



# the Space Place

March – April 2014 / Vol. 7, Issue 2

## NEWS AND NOTES FOR FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATORS

The Space Place is a NASA website for elementary school-aged kids, their teachers, and their parents.

It's colorful!  
It's dynamic!  
It's fun!

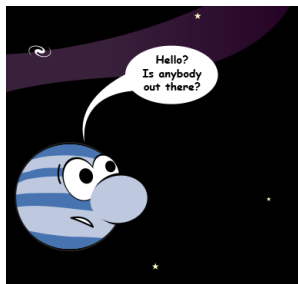
It's rich with science, technology, engineering, and math content!

It's informal.  
It's meaty.  
It's easy to read and understand.  
It's also in Spanish.  
And it's free!

It has over 150 separate modules for kids, including hands-on projects, interactive games, animated cartoons, and amazing facts about space and Earth science and technology.

*The Space Place prides itself on its ability to be useful to educators—informal and formal alike. In an effort to reach as wide an audience as possible, we have made our popular 'make-and-do' activities available in a print-ready, downloadable pdf format. This will allow educators with more students than computers to easily run these fun, educational activities without limitation. Check it out at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/make-do-pdf>.*

### What's New? The Lone Planet



What makes a planet a planet? In our own solar system we have a pretty clear definition—something that orbits our sun, and is large enough to have its gravity mold it into

a sphere and clear out any objects floating around nearby. But what about outside our solar system? A recent discovery of a lonely planet hovering around in space without a star to call its sun makes classifying planets a bit less straightforward. The Space Place tackles this new discovery and the debate about planethood with two new articles: <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/lone-planet> and <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/planet-what-is>.

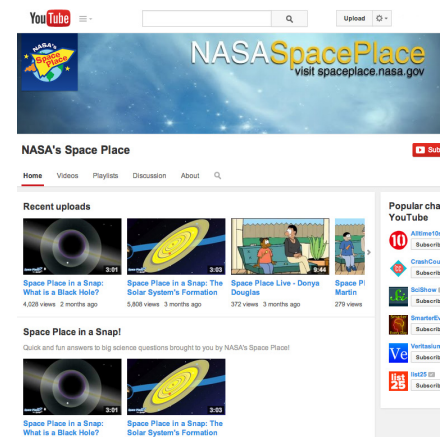
### Space Place en Español: Comet Quest

Not only is our popular game—'Comet Quest'—updated and better than ever. We also have a new Spanish version of the game on Space Place en Español. You get to land a rover on a comet and collect and



transmit as much data as possible as you command a comet orbiter faced with an increasing number of challenges. <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/comet-quest/sp/>.

### Spotlight on YouTube



The Space Place now has its own YouTube channel! Be sure to check it for updates frequently. Not only will the channel be highlighting our popular 'Space Place in a Snap' videos, but we are also re-releasing our popular 'Space Place Live' animated series on YouTube in honor of the series' ten-year anniversary. <http://www.youtube.com/nasaspaceplace>.

## For the Classroom

We have created a new informational brochure that would be a great addition to any classroom. Interested in knowing a little bit more about the things in our solar system that are not our sun or the planets? Find out what these smaller bodies tell us about our cosmic neighborhood's formation. Check out and download 'Small Worlds, Big Discoveries' for your classroom today! <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/posters/en/#small-bodies>.



## For Out-of-School Time

Snow day or heavy rain got you stuck inside? Why not give Space Place's latest 'make-and-do' activity a try. In this activity, you get to be the chief engineer for your own NASA mission. You will design a satellite—and all the choices are yours. We provide some suggestions in terms of materials (both edible and not edible), outline some of the basic requirements of a NASA satellite, and provide some examples of both real satellites and satellite models. <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/build-a-spacecraft>.



## Special Days

### March 7 - Kepler mission launched in 2009.

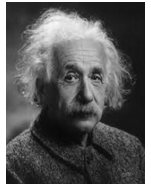
Kepler looks for habitable planets outside our solar system. It has found thousands of candidate planets! Make a model of your own Kepler spacecraft! <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/build-a-spacecraft>.

### March 11: - International Ask a Question Day.

Visitors to Space Place partner museums have asked a lot of good questions, to which Dr. Marc has answers. <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/menu/dr-marc/>.

### March 14: Albert Einstein's Birthday and Pi Day.

Not only was Einstein born on this day in 1875, but the day coincides with another very mathy holiday—Pi Day ( $\pi = 3.14 =$  March 14th)! Learn more about Einstein here: <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/what-is-gravity>.



**April 1: April Fool's Day.** At least teach your nose not to be fooled! <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/e-nose>.

**April 12: First Space Shuttle Launched in 1981.** See pictures of Space Shuttle launches and landings. <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/gallery-technology/#rockets>.

**April 22: Earth Day.** Play "Missions to Planet Earth"—an online card game. <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/earth-card-game/>.

**April 27: Tell A Story Day.** Read a couple of the storybooks on The Space Place, then make up your own story about space! <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/menu/storybook>.

## Share

Want some help spreading the word about NASA's Space Place? Check out <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/share>.

## Send Feedback

Please let us know your ideas about ways to use The Space Place in your teaching. Send to [info@spaceplace.nasa.gov](mailto:info@spaceplace.nasa.gov).